



# The City of Grove City, Ohio

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Planning Commission Staff Report

Council Chambers

October 3, 2017 1:30pm

- 4. APPLICATION: Stringtown Road Apartments | Preliminary Development Plan**
- Project Number: 201709150026
- Location: 2384 Stringtown Road (040-005711, 040-005652, and 040-007782)
- Proposal: A preliminary development plan for 138 apartments
- Applicant: Mark Catalano, Fairway Realty/Metropolitan Holdings, 3100 Tremont Road, Suite 200, Columbus, OH 43221

**Relevant Code Section(s):**

- 1135.14 Zoning Districts and Regulations – Planned Unit Development District

**Project Summary**

The applicant is requesting approval of a preliminary development plan for a new multi-family residential development containing 138 apartments in four (4) buildings. This project would be a redevelopment of the Star Cinema site at the terminus of Parkmead Drive. The buildings will be three-stories and will utilize balconies for outdoor space with each unit. The overall density of the site is proposed to be 21 dwelling units per acre.

The proposed redevelopment is, in the opinion of staff, the first piece to redeveloping the area into the mixed-use area shown on future land use plans. The applicant has indicated they have been in negotiation with adjacent property owners for other potential redevelopment opportunities that could be incorporated into the proposed development as part of a later phase.

**Site Plan**

The 6.57-acre site is proposed to be accessed from Parkmead Drive from the east and from the K-Mart site to the west. An existing 30' drive in the west portion of the site will remain to provide access for truck deliveries to the adjacent Kmart. 24' drive aisles provide access to the parking areas in the interior of the site. The four residential buildings are primarily located around the perimeter of the site and along the extended drive from Parkmead Drive. A Clubhouse and pool are proposed in the southeast corner of the site, with mailboxes located adjacent to the Clubhouse, and a trash compactor located in the center of the site.

A total of 138 housing units are proposed on the site for an overall density of 21 dwelling units per acre. Although the proposed density is over the maximum permitted density of eight (8) dwelling units per acre for standard (A-1) multi-family residential developments, staff believes the proposed density is appropriate for the site given the more urban context. Staff is supportive of higher density developments in mixed-use, walkable areas, such as the recently developed Broadway Station Apartments in the Town Center which features a density of approximately 35 dwelling units per acre. Future land use plans show this property within a mixed-use area, and the apartment complex directly adjacent to the north (The Grove Apartments) on Sonora Drive has a density of 16 dwelling units per acre.

Based on the number of units proposed in the development, 6.18 acres of open space is required on site. The submitted site plan does not indicate the proposed amount of open space, and much

of the open space shown on the plans appears to be within the floodplain. Materials do indicate that the development will offer a clubhouse with community spaces and amenities, a pool, fire pit, and outdoor grilling area. Given the urban context of the site and the fact that this is a redevelopment of an existing land-locked commercial property, staff would be supportive of a reduced amount of private open space on the site, provided that payment in lieu of the required open space is provided, per the Open Space Requirements section of Code (1101.09(b)).

A preliminary utility plan was submitted showing how the proposed redevelopment will tap into existing utilities on the site. The plan also shows preliminary stormwater management through a retention pond on the eastern portion of the site and additional detention underground. More detail will be required with the final development plan to determine the appropriateness of proposed utilities.

### Landscaping

The applicant has indicated on the submitted site plan that the existing wooded area associated with the stream along the north and east property lines will be preserved. Additional trees and landscaping are generally shown throughout the proposed development; however, no landscape plan was submitted with this application. A more detailed landscape plan will be required to be submitted with the final development plan.

### Parking

The site will contain 241 parking spaces, with 196 open spaces and three (3) garages containing an additional 45 parking spaces. The provided parking is under the amount required for a standard (A-1) multi-family residential project of 2.5 parking spaces per unit (345 spaces); however, the proposed project would provide more than one space per bedroom proposed in the development (222 bedrooms).

### Buildings

Square footages were not provided for proposed buildings or units within buildings; however, a breakdown is provided in terms of number of bedrooms provided. Materials indicate that 12 units will offer three-bedrooms, 60 units will be two-bedroom, and 66 units will have one-bedroom. Preliminary renderings show and the project narrative states that residential buildings will utilize a combination of brick masonry and vinyl siding. Roofing materials will be asphalt shingles and railings for patios will be white vinyl or colored aluminum.

Because the proposed development is within Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) #2 and improvements to the property will be tax abated for 15 years, staff will expect buildings to feature quality materials and architectural details beyond a standard multi-family residential development. Although buildings will likely not have direct visibility from Stringtown Road, the redevelopment of this site will set the standard for future redevelopment in the area.

### Analysis

Per Section 1135.14 of the Codified Ordinances of Grove City, Planning Commission is charged with reviewing and evaluating Preliminary and Final Development Plan applications by applying the eight (8) findings.

- (1) **The uses proposed will not be detrimental to present and potential surrounding uses, but will have a beneficial effect which could not be achieved under any other district.**

**Finding Met:** The proposed use will not be detrimental to present and potential surrounding uses, as there are currently other residential areas nearby to the north and commercial areas within safe walking distance to the west and south. Staff is supportive of the proposed residential use of the property as it is a redevelopment of a currently vacant property that will promote mixed use along the Stringtown Road corridor, consistent with future land uses identified for the area. Moreover, this site has poorer visibility from Stringtown Road than other commercial properties along the corridor, making this a challenging site for a commercial use on the property.

- (2) **Any exception from Zoning Code (Ordinance C79-74, passed January 20, 1975) requirements is warranted by the design and amenities incorporated in the Development Plan.**

**Finding Can Be Met:** A number of deviations from Code are shown with the proposed preliminary plan including the number of parking spaces, amount of open space, and setbacks from adjacent properties; however, given that this is a redevelopment site in a more urban context, staff is willing to entertain certain deviations provided that the overall quality of the development is not negatively affected. Similar deviations have been granted to other recently developed residential projects in mixed-use areas such as the Broadway Station Apartments.

- (3) **Land surrounding the proposed development can be planned in coordination with the proposed development and that it is compatible in use.**

**Finding Can Be Met:** Surrounding areas can be planned in coordination with this proposed development as it is utilizing existing connectivity of roadways and sidewalks. The proposed development is denser than other surrounding residential uses; however, staff feels that it is appropriate for this area as it is keeping with the mixed-use character identified in future land use maps.

- (4) **The proposed change to a Planned Unit Development District is in conformance with the general use intent of the area.**

**Finding Met:** While the area is currently zoned as C-2 (Retail Commercial), which does not permit residential uses, this property is shown within a mixed-use area on future land use maps associated with the draft GroveCity2050 plan.

- (5) **Existing and proposed streets are suitable and adequate to carry anticipated traffic within the proposed district and in the vicinity of the proposed district.**

**Finding Can be Met:** The proposed development will have access from Parkmead Drive and the K-Mart property, both of which have signalized intersections at Stringtown Road. Staff would like to see additional information provided on the southern drive, particularly its integration into Parkmead Drive to ensure that a safe connection is made. Documentation of cross-access easements over the southern drive and the K-Mart property will also be required with the final development plan.

- (6) **Existing and proposed utility services are adequate for the proposed development.**

**Finding Met:** The preliminary utility plan shows how the proposed development will tap into the existing utilities on the site as well as very general stormwater management. A more detailed review of utilities will be conducted with the review of the final development plan.

- (7) **Each phase of the proposed development, as it is proposed to be completed contains the required parking spaces, landscape and utility areas necessary for creating and sustaining a desirable and stable environment.**

**Finding Met:** Although a number of items will require deviations from Code requirements, staff believes that these deviations can be handled through a PUD zoning text to ensure a high quality redevelopment of the site. Staff believes the parking, landscaping, and utilities as preliminarily shown on the site plan (with further detail to be provided with final development plan) have the potential to create a desirable and stable environment.

- (8) **The proposed Planned Unit Development District and all proposed buildings, parking spaces and landscape and utility areas can be completely developed within seven years of the establishment of the district, unless otherwise provided for by Council.**

**Finding Met:** The proposed project, including building, parking spaces, landscaping, and utilities can be completely developed within seven years.

#### **Recommendation**

Staff is supportive of the use of multi-family residential on the site in order to further the redevelopment of the area into a mixed-use environment. Noting that more detail will be given for examination to ensure a quality redevelopment of the site with the final development plan, the Development Department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Preliminary Development Plan as submitted.